

SBC – Feb 23, 2025
Psalm 59 (NKJV)
“God Our Stronghold”

Psalm 59 is yet another Psalm of David. When David was in trouble, he wrote. It drove him to seek God passionately, and he wrote about it – and consequently, we are the benefactors.

Being a man after God’s own heart did not make him immune from trouble. Evidently, David didn’t know about the “*prosperity gospel*”. And it is amazing how many enemies David had. David was Israel's greatest king, and yet he was hounded by enemies – in this case, before he ever even got to the throne.

This makes sense when we realize that behind the scenes, there is a great spiritual war taking place, and we are caught right in the thick of it. But we need to learn from David – take it to the Lord. That is what David did, and so must we. We can share brutally (reverently) but openly and honestly what is going on in our hearts and experience. That is what David did.

The superscription says:

Psalm 59 (NKJV)
To the Chief Musician. Set to “Do Not Destroy.” A Michtam of David When Saul Sent Men, and They Watched the House in Order to Kill Him.

“To the Chief Musician” evidently indicates it was intended to be used in corporate worship.

“Set to ‘*Do Not Destroy*’,” was probably a well-known tune. Four of the Psalms are designated in this way, as seen in Psalms 57, 58, 59, and 75.

The meaning of “*Michtam*” is uncertain. Possible interpretations include “writing,” “golden,” or “engraving”. I personally like the idea of “writing” which simply attributes it to David. A Michtam of David, then, would simply be “*A writing of David*”.

The occasion was when Saul sent men to David’s house to watch for him with the goal of killing him. This is recorded in 1 Sam. 19:11-17.

Slide # 1

1 Samuel 19:11–12 (NKJV)

11 Saul also sent messengers to David's house **to watch him and to kill him in the morning.** And Michal, David's wife, told him, saying, "If you do not save your life tonight, tomorrow you will be killed."

12 So **Michal let David down through a window.** And he went and fled and escaped.

Slide # 2

Psalm 59

"God our Stronghold"

- vv. 1-2 David's Prayer for Deliverance
- vv. 3-5 David's Desperate Situation
- vv. 6-7 The Wicked Arrogance of David's Enemies
- vv. 8-10 David's Confidence in God
- vv. 11-13 David's Request Against his Enemies
- vv. 14-15 The Enemies Continuing Threat
- vv. 16-17 David's Song of Praise

1 Deliver me from my enemies, O my God; Defend me from those who rise up against me.

David just blurts it out – getting right to the point! His petition was urgent! He was in desperate trouble and needed God to deliver him. He asked God to deliver and defend him. He needed God's help!

To "***deliver***" means to rescue or bring out of trouble.

Defend me: The sense of this ancient Hebrew word is *to lift up*, as into a safe and defended place. It says, "Lift me up to Your high tower where I am even higher above **those who rise up against me.**" This idea is repeated three more times in the psalm ([Psalm 59:9](#), [16-17](#)).

-David Guzik

Slide # 3

Proverbs 18:10 (NKJV)

10 The name of the LORD is a strong tower; The righteous run to it and are safe.

This is David's testimony. This where he ran!

2 Deliver me from the workers of iniquity, And save me from bloodthirsty men.

In intense prayer, we often repeat basic and simple requests. Again, David asks God to deliver him from workers of iniquity and from bloodthirsty men.

This didn't necessarily refer to all of Saul's men – but to his henchmen whose desire for personal advancement by currying favor with the king who wanted David dead.

These men cared nothing about the value of human life; they did not care about God's sacred anointing of David by the prophet Samuel. They really didn't value God or His people – even God's anointed one. These were really wicked people. All they cared about was SELF and living for self-advantage – no matter whom it hurt in the process.

3 For look, they lie in wait for my life; The mighty gather against me, Not for my transgression nor for my sin, O LORD.

These people were assassins. They were purposely trying to KILL David. They were from the government and in the position of POWER.

David expresses that this is not because of sin on his part. He was not guilty of treason or disloyalty as he had been falsely accused of being.

David wasn't arguing sinless perfection, but rather that they were trying to kill him for no justified reason. He hadn't done anything to warrant this. He was being framed.

4 They run and prepare themselves through no fault of mine. Awake to help me, and behold!

Again, for emphasis, David says they are setting themselves against him, but he hasn't done anything to deserve this.

He urgently cries out for God to awake and help him. He pleads for God to "see" saying, "behold!"

Of course David knew that God sees all – but it was David's way of asking for God to act immediately because the situation was desperately urgent.

5 You therefore, O LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel, Awake to punish all the nations; Do not be merciful to any wicked transgressors. Selah

Here, David uses three different names for God as if to call on God for all that He is and asks Him to act in accordance with His essential being.

Slide # 4

LORD – YHWH (the Covenant God of Israel)

God of hosts – Elohim Sabaoth (Commander of the armies of heaven)

God of Israel – Elohi Israel (The God of His chosen people)

David's request to deliver him made him think of God setting things right on a global scale. I mean if God could do this for David, He could also do it on a worldwide scale which is the ultimate desire.

God is faithful as the covenant God of Israel. He can be depended upon. He commands angelic armies so all power is at His disposal. And God's chosen people are ever special to Him. Surely this reality of WHO He is would move Him – and so David appeals to God on the basis of WHO He is.

That is thoughtful praying – powerful praying! I believe it has the ear of God like no other kind of praying!

David asks God to move and not spare them anymore. This assumes they are hardened to the point of no return where they will not repent. And he goes on to describe them...

6 At evening they return, They growl like a dog, And go all around the city.

The Jews believed dogs were unclean animals. They didn't think of them like most Americans – "as man's best friend". For the most part, they were wild, threatening, snarling, often running in packs and living off garbage heaps. Dogs were so detestable that they were even known to eat people (cf. 1 Kg. 21:19-24; 2 Kg. 9:33-37). And they didn't give up easily trying to find something to devour.

So, as David is describing these wicked bloodthirsty men, he describes them in terms of dogs. Just like a mean, vicious dog scavenging the city, they would return in the evening looking for what they might devour – in this case, David himself.

7 Indeed, they belch with their mouth; Swords are in their lips; For they say, “Who hears?”

Belching is the idea of frothing or foaming at the mouth and spewing out sharp words that are as piercing as swords. And they have no fear, saying, **“Who hears?”**

They don't even think God hears them. They have no fear of God. They are so arrogant that they think no one knows about their sinfully wicked actions. Wicked people become so hardened that they really do think they can get away with it! This is a seared conscience! It is really scary when a person gets to that point. No wonder David cried out for their punishment (v. 5).

This depicts the character of Saul's hired killers.

The Jews usually thought of Gentiles as “dogs,” but in David's mind, these fellow Jews, at this point, were also acting like filthy, vicious, unclean dogs. Their character was like “filthy Gentiles” who do not know God. Their character is depraved and vicious.

Verse 8 marks a turning point in the Psalm where the focus moves from focusing on the wicked to focusing on God.

8 But You, O LORD, shall laugh at them; You shall have all the nations in derision.

They have no regard for God, but the LORD shall laugh at them and have all nations who are in rebellion in derision. This applies to David's murderous enemies, and all in the world hardened against God to where they have no fear of Him.

When it says God shall laugh at them it means He will ridicule or scoff at them (cf. Ps. 2:4; 37:12-13). The Lord is going to totally expose the folly of their ways in a most humiliating manner.

Yes, David's enemies were "mighty" (v. 3), but as David looked Godward, he realized they were no match for God. God laughs at them! They can't be taken seriously by Him.

The spies were watching for David, but David was "on watch" looking for the Lord to act. – **Warren Wiersbe**

9 I will wait for You, O You his Strength; For God is my defense.

When we pour out our hearts to God, then we must WAIT for God to act. To wait can have the idea of "to watch".

The enemies of David had come to watch for him; but David was determined to "watch" for God. – **Nelson Study Bible**

This next line should be understood as "my strength". Within ourselves, we are very vulnerable, weak, and fragile. But when God is our strength, we have the might of heaven behind us.

Slide # 5

Isaiah 26:4 (NKJV)

4 Trust in the LORD forever, For **in YAH, the LORD, is everlasting strength.**

Psalms 73:26 (NKJV)

26 My flesh and my heart fail; But **God is the strength of my heart** and my portion forever.

When God has your heart, you have His strength! He gives grace for every situation – whatever we are facing. Happy is the person who finds their strength in God. This week I was dealing with a situation where the person felt they had come to the end of their strength. I wrote to them...

Just take one day at a time as our Lord told us to do. Take it to the LORD in prayer. Pour out your heart to Him. As the Bible says we can cast ALL our cares on Him because He cares for us. This is the walk of FAITH. It depends on God when we have nothing else. Let God be your strength and your everything. Just cry out to Him. He's got you. Rest in Him!

Reminding this person of this truth greatly comforted them! We all need to be reminded – especially when the bottom seemingly falls out.

David was depending on God to be his strength and his defense. Again, the idea of “defense” was a place of refuge. A form of this word is found in verses 1, 9, 16, and 17.

10 My God of mercy shall come to meet me; God shall let me see my desire on my enemies.

The word “mercy” here is the Hebrew word “hesed” meaning God’s loyal faithfulness. David pictures God in faithfulness coming out to meet him. God is not going to let him down.

The HCSB translates it, “My faithful God will come to meet me...”. David did not see God as keeping His distance but rather that He would meet him in his need. God was coming to his rescue.

Note that the end of this verse literally says, “God shall let me see on my enemies leaving out “my desire”.

“Observe that the words, ‘*my desire,*’ are not in the original. From the Hebrew we are taught that David expected to see his enemies without fear. God will enable his servant to gaze steadily upon the foe without trepidation; he shall be calm, and self-possessed, in the hour of peril.” -**Charles Spurgeon**

11 Do not slay them, lest my people forget; Scatter them by Your power, And bring them down, O Lord our shield.

David wants God to use this as a teachable moment for the rest of the people – showing them how serious it is to wickedly take on and try to destroy the Lord’s anointed.

At this point, David does not ask God to destroy his enemies but rather appeals to God as his shield to scatter them and bring them down. In effect, David is asking God to prolong their punishment and draw it out so that it will be obvious to all.

And in particular David has the sins of their mouth in view.

12 For the sin of their mouth and the words of their lips, Let them even be taken in their pride, And for the cursing and lying which they speak.

One of the greatest lies ever told is: “Sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never hurt me.” Read the Psalms. David, over and over, brings out that one of the most hurtful and destructive things was malicious words meant to harm and destroy him.

Malicious words do more damage than any other thing. I think more hurt in the world has been caused by the tongue than any other thing.

This is one of the worst sins imaginable! You can literally destroy people with words. Happens all the time. It is terribly tragic.

David sees that behind their evil speech is the issue of PRIDE! Pride operates independently of God – doing its own self-serving thing. Pride has no fear of God. Pride makes life all about SELF! In their ego-driven world, they thought they were going to take David out.

13 Consume them in wrath, consume them, That they may not be; And let them know that God rules in Jacob To the ends of the earth. Selah

In verse 11, David says not to slay them, but here, in verse 13, he asks for God to consume them with a double emphasis. The entire thought seems to be that David wants them to suffer a while as a lesson for others but then ultimately to be taken out. He does not want them to escape the full consequences of their outrageous sinfulness.

David is clear: Consume them in wrath, consume them, that they may not be. David plainly asking for God to wipe them out to the end that they might know that God rules in Jacob to the ends of the earth.

David isn't just praying for his sake, but in reference to God's glory. This really was God-oriented praying. They have no regard for God, but David wants them to be forced to recognize His sovereign rule.

This is very similar to what David said to Goliath in 1 Sam. 17.

Slide # 6

1 Samuel 17:46 (NKJV)

46 This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you and take your head from you. And this day I will give the carcasses of the camp of the Philistines to the birds of the air and the wild beasts of the earth, **that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.**

Selah- stop and soak in the gravity of this. This is really serious stuff – messing with the God of Jacob, Who has chosen David to be the king.

If David's requests seem brutal and not in the spirit of Christ, keep in mind that Israel's future and the future of David's chosen dynasty were both at stake. – **Warren Wiersbe**

14 And at evening they return, They growl like a dog, And go all around the city.

15 They wander up and down for food, And howl if they are not satisfied.

Here they come again, growling like dogs as they wander the streets like a hungry pack of dangerous dogs who howl if they are not satisfied.

16 But I will sing of Your power; Yes, I will sing aloud of Your mercy in the morning; For You have been my defense And refuge in the day of my trouble.

This is the second "But" in the Psalm (v. 8, 16), each time denoting David's determination to focus on the Lord.

David determines that he will sing of God's power in the midst of this threat. Yes, he will sing aloud of God mercy which again is God's "hesed" meaning His loyal covenant love or faithfulness.

David speaks in past tense as though it is a done deal that God has been his defense – his refuge in the day of his trouble. We call this the "prophetic perfect" when something is spoken of as absolutely certain that it will happen.

David's mind is completely renewed at this point. He is signing God's praises, absolutely confident that God is going to defend him and save him from this situation.

He started the psalm asking God for His defense ([Psalm 59:1](#)); at the end of the psalm he was so confident that **God is my defense** that he could sing about it. – **David Guzik**

17 To You, O my Strength, I will sing praises; For God is my defense, My God of mercy.

The Psalm ends with high praise for God Who is David's strength and defense. He therefore sing's His praises with special emphasis on His mercy (hesed).

Where did David find his strength and joy. It was in knowing and reflecting on WHO God was to him.

Slide # 7

- My God (Psalm 59:1).
- My Defense (Psalm 59:9, 17).
- My God of mercy (Psalm 59:10, 17).
- My Strength (Psalm 59:9, 17).

When you face great challenges in life that are overwhelming – learn the secret that David knew. Our strength is found in knowing WHO God is to us. That's what it's all about.

Let God be your focus – this is where our strength is found!